

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. In a remote audience survey system, a method of compensating for a station bias, said survey system being configured to identify radio stations to which tuners are tuned, said tuners having predetermined signals emitted therefrom, and said method comprising the steps of:

measuring durations during which a portion of said predetermined signals are received by said survey system, said portion of said predetermined signals describing one of said radio stations;

combining said durations to form a characteristic detection statistic for said one radio station; and

adjusting a sensitivity level to provide an amplitude threshold for said one radio station in response to said characteristic detection statistic to compensate for said station bias prior to collecting survey data.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said durations are first durations, said portion of predetermined signals are first predetermined signals, and said measuring step additionally comprises the steps of:

measuring second durations over which second predetermined signals are identified by said survey system, said second predetermined signals describing a second one of said radio stations; and

merging said first and second durations to establish a detection parameter.

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3. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein:

said sensitivity level is adjusted by modifying one of a signal strength threshold, a noise quieting threshold, a gain value, and an antenna attenuation value in said survey system for said one radio station.

4. A method as claimed in claim 3 wherein:

said noise quieting threshold is a maximum level of noise quieting said survey system achieves in the presence of said portion of said predetermined signals for said one radio station; and

said modifying step changes said noise quieting threshold.

5. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said station bias is exhibited during a first survey period, and said adjusting step adjusts said sensitivity level to compensate for said station bias during a second survey period, said second survey period following said first survey period.

6. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein:

said station bias is a first bias in a first survey period; and

said method further comprises the step of repeating said measuring, combining, comparing, and adjusting steps in response to a second bias in a second survey period.

7. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said portion of said predetermined signals are local oscillator signals emitted by said tuners.

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8. A bias compensating remote audience survey system for identifying radio stations to which tuners are tuned, said tuners having predetermined signals emitted therefrom, and said system comprising:

an antenna for establishing a detection zone within which a portion of said predetermined signals are occasionally emitted, said portion of said predetermined signals describing one of said radio stations;

a receiver, coupled to said antenna, for receiving said portion of said predetermined signals;

a timer, coupled to said receiver, for measuring durations over which said portion of said predetermined signals are received;

a compiler, in data communication with said timer, for compiling said durations to form a characteristic detection statistic for said one radio station; and

a bias compensator, coupled between said compiler and said receiver, for adjusting a sensitivity level to provide an amplitude threshold for said one radio station in response to said characteristic detection statistic.

9. A bias compensating remote audience survey system as claimed in claim 8 wherein said bias compensator is configured to provide said receiver with an adjustment parameter for modifying one of a signal strength threshold, a noise quieting threshold, a gain value, and an antenna attenuation value.

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